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ABSTRACT

A compilation of activities and instructional ideas on advertising helps intermediate or junior high school teachers incorporate simple consumer education concepts into the social studies curriculum. Material is divided into three sections. An outline defines 16 advertising techniques including eye appeal, youth appeal, snob appeal, celebrity endorsement, and expert endorsement. A list provides activities to help students realize the effects of advertising. Examples include compiling an advertising scrapbook, creating imaginary products, analyzing magazine ads, and answering a market survey. A final list contains activities for evaluating television and radio commercials. (LP)

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BUY, BUY, BUY

HOW TO RECOGNIZE ADVERTISING APPEALS

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With the holiday season fast approaching, children will soon be inundated with advertising appeals to buy, buy, buy!

Part of a sound social studies curriculum for elementary school children should include some basic economic education concepts. Alvin Toffler in his book "Future Shock" discusses the many choices to deal with when compared to children of the past. These choices range from breakfast cereals to lifestyles.

We find vivid examples of using Toffler's term "overchoice" when monitoring the television programs children are viewing. The subtle and not so subtle advertising techniques are confronting children each time they view a program. These sales pitches are viewed usually every twelve to fifteen minute intervals. The message is clear. . . buy, buy, buy.

We can help children deal with choices and decision making by providing them with some basic instruction and information about advertising and advertising techniques. This instruction can take place by involving children in consumer awareness activities.

These activities can begin with making children aware of the many different types of advertising appeals they see not only on T.V., but in their daily routine as members of society. They see advertising on the side of buses, in subway and train stations, on billboards and even advertising by word of mouth or testimony from playmates and friends.

The following is designed to help teachers develop some simple economic education concepts in their social studies curriculum. These ideas and activities will provide children with some basic consumer information about advertising.

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TYPES OF ADVERTISING APPEALS

1. STRAIGHTFORWARD ADS: Without any frill or lace, the ad tells that the product is what it does, how much it costs, and where you can buy it. Many newspaper ads are of this type.

2. SPECIAL OFFER: The reader is offered a money-saving coupon, a free price, or a chance to win a contest.

3. EYE APPEAL: A photograph on TV shows how good the product looks in order to suggest how good it tastes or smells.

4. HAPPY FAMILY APPEAL: The message used to sell cleaning products and foods is often, "Your family will be happy if you use our product."

5. AN EXPERT SAYS: Since chefs are experts on food, people will trust them to recommend a brand of lima beans.

6. FAMOUS PEOPLE SAY: The endorsement of a product by a celebrity is a very old and famout advertising device. (Do baseball players really know more than anyone else about razor blades?)

7. BANDWAGON APPEAL: The message is our product is so good that everyone buys it. You should too.

8. SNOB APPEAL: This is the reverse of the bandwagon appeal. It says that buying the product will make you better than everyone else.

9. YOUTH APPEAL: These ads sell products to people who are young or wish they were by suggesting that the product is for young people.

10. SYMBOLS: A symbol in advertising is a quick way to get a message across.

11. SOMETHING NEW: Something new can be added to a product to make it better--or to make it sound better.

12. HUMBLE APPROACH: By admitting that your product is not the best or the most popular, you can draw attention to your ad and at the same time convince the listener or reader that you are doing everything you can to make your product better.

13. STATISTICS: Often a good way to sell a product. Would a company that tells about a survey give the unfavorable results?

14. ECOLOGY/PUBLIC SERVICE: Some products are advertised as causing less damage to the environment than others.

15. SEX APPEAL: This appeal is used to sell the strangest products!

16. HUMOR: Humor does get your attention to buy a product.

ACTIVITIES TO SHOW THE EFFECTS OF ADVERTISING

1. Discuss with your children the idea of persuasion. Talk with them about things that they may have been persuaded to buy because of misleading information. Have each child construct a persuasion collage that they may discuss.

2. As a consumer or buyer, children must learn to separate fact from opinion, truths from half-truths or outright lies, products which they will need from those which will be of little value. After discussing fact versus opinion, provide an activity sheet of statements which would allow students to comment regarding the nature of each item.

   A deer is a four-legged animal
   Reason:
   The best television story ever written was "Roots."
   Reason:

3. Have children learn some of the advertising appeals. Cut ads from magazines and make a scrapbook of different advertising appeals. Browse through several magazines and clip examples of the different techniques used in advertising. Mount the samples on tagboard. Beneath each sample write a brief explanation of the appeal.

4. As a follow-up activity, mount other samples on $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 11" pieces of construction paper and have the students classify them. Label them on the back with a brief description to help the students understand why an ad is classified under a particular category.

5. Get magazine or mail ads that offer a brand-new product. Make a booklet by placing these ads between plastic or laminate. Compose a set of questions to accompany each ad which will require students to read with a sharp eye. For example:

   What product is being advertised?
   How do the advertisers make you feel like buying their product?
   Is the picture the actual size?
   What is the product's cost?

6. Ask students to create an imaginary product. They need to consider the necessary jobs for manufacturing and distributing the product. Different groups could work on these components.

   Manufacturer--decides the best way to package the product and distribute it.
   Advertising Agency--suggests what advertising appeals work best with the product.
   Design Artist and Slogan Team--determine what the ad will look like and develops a catchy slogan.

Younger children can talk about these components and perhaps create sketches of their ideas. Older children can actually create a model of the product, a sample package, and an advertising program for selling. They might even manufacture, package, and market the item as a class project.

7. Have the children write a report or make a booklet on "Women in Advertisements" or "Men in Advertisements." Select several examples from television, magazines, or radio, and use them to show how women and men are viewed by the people who make the ads. Ads can be directed at the woman as housewife, mother, sex symbol, object of beauty, professional person, etc. Ads can be directed at the man as sports enthusiast, financial wizard, professional person, family breadwinner, father, etc. Remember, the different slants given ads are called "advertising appeals." Have them find and label different advertising appeals to men and women.

8. Have the children do an analysis of advertising appeals directed towards men or women in two different magazines (Sports Illustrated vs. Newsweek)

   Do avertising appeals directed at a given sex differ depending upon the magazines? If you see such differences, what does this tell you about the audience for whom each magazine is intended?
   Is there more equality of sexes in a sports magazine?
   Have them write or discuss their findings. They should be able to support their data with examples.

9. Find samples of ads offering children a chance to sell a certain product for super profits, or use the following fictitious candy advertisement.

   Here it is kids, the offer you've been waiting for. Now you can sell the best-selling candy--EL GUMMO. Are you ready to earn super profits? Here is how.

   EL GUMMO is ordered by the carton. There are 30 packets of candy in each carton. Your job is simple--just sell at least 10 cartons for the low price of 25¢ for each packet. And watch your profits grow!

   ORDER NOW! CALL TOLL FREE THE EL CUMMO CANDY COMPANY. There is NO INVESTMENT, NO RISK.

   Payment for the full order is not due until thirty days after the candy is ordered.

   Ask children to respond to questions such as these:
   - What advertising appeal is used in this ad?
   - What king of candy is EL GUMMO?
   - How many packets are in a carton?
   - How many packets must you sell?
   - How much profit do you make on each packet?
   - What telephone number are you to call?
   - How soon are you to pay the company?
   - How many candy packages must you average a day selling?
   - What can you do with the candy you do not sell?

ADVERTISEMENTS ON RADIO AND TV IDEAS

1. To help children apply what they have learned about advertising techniques, record several suitable ads from the TV or radio and ask students to listen carefully. The following questions could be asked:

    a. What product is being advertised?
    b. Which appeal is being used?
    c. What makes this an exciting product.
    d. What symbol is being used to sell this product?
    e. What reasons are given to buy this product? Do you agree?

2. Certain words are often used to capture the consumer's attention. Words such as the following can be discussed: clearance, discount, dependable, quality, special, stock reduction, grand opening, famous, bonus, competitive, coupons, and so on.

    Definitions of these words can be discussed through the use of crossword puzzles, word searches, or by creating a story with blank spaces to fill in. Synonym games can also be played for example: "I am thinking of a word that means to sell out completely."

3. Advertising is full of jingles and slogans. Create an activity sheet of current slogans and sayings for students to identify with the product being advertised.

    Example: Fly the friendly skies of _____
    You could also record some familiar jingles and slogans from TV. Then have the students work in groups to orally identify the product.

4. Advertising agencies have developed symbols which represent products. People, animals, cartoon characters, and abstract thoughts or objects are used. Ask the students to come up with a list of these symbols used on radio and TV to share with the class. example: Morris the cat, Goodyear Blimp.

5. Pantomiming Advertisements

6. Saturday Morning Cartoons - Get together with a friend and watch the advertisements from Saturday morning cartoons. Make a tally sheet of the different appeals used. Count each of the different ways that advertisers use these appeals. If a company uses more than one approach, count them. Is there a clear-cut method that is used to sell products to young people? Report your findings to the class.